

**TOWN OF HADDAM  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
PUBLIC HEARINGS/MEETING  
TOWN HALL  
21 FIELD PARK DRIVE, HADDAM, CT 06438  
THURSDAY, 26 MAY 2022  
UNAPPROVED MINUTES  
*Subject to Approval by the Board***

**ATTENDANCE**

X	Marjorie W. DeBold
A	Joseph Laurenza
A	Robin Munster, Chairman
X	Kenneth Wendt, Vice Chairman
X	Kate Wessling
X	Margo Chase-Wells, Alternate – Seated
X	Susann Costa, Alternate - Seated
A	Jessica Labbe Kuchyt, Alternate
X	William Warner, AICP Town Planner
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

**1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Wendt, Vice Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Attendance/Seating of the Alternates**

Attendance was taken.

**MOTION:** Marjorie DeBold motioned to seat Susann Costa for Robin Munster and Margo Chase-Wells for Joe Laurenza. Margo Chase-Wells second. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wendt explained the public hearing/meeting process and read the Legal Notice.

**3. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**a. Variance to Allow a Free Standing Pylon Sign with Integrated Illumination within the Tylerville Village District Zone. Applicant: Kara Kennedy. Location: 1598 Saybrook Road, Haddam, CT – Map 49, Lot 31-A**

Neither the applicant nor a representative was present.

Mr. Wendt opened the hearing at 7:24 p.m.

Mr. Warner stated he's been trying to reach out to the applicant and have not heard back as to whether or not they would be attending tonight's hearing/meeting. Mr. Warner recommended the Board deny the application without prejudice which would allow them to reapply and come back at a future meeting.

Mrs. Costa asked what a pylon sign is. Mr. Warner showed Mrs. Costa a picture. Ms. Wessling stated the problem with this pylon is its 20 feet high and the sign is 45 square feet. Mr. Warner stated unfortunately, the town does not have a height requirement on signs, which the town should, but this one is too big square footage wise. Mr. Warner also stated in the Tylerville Village District they do not allow internally lit signs. Ms. Wessling asked about the other two signs. Mr. Warner stated the Tylerville Village District regulations went into effect in 2018 and the other two signs were installed when it was just a

commercial zone. Mrs. Chase-Wells asked if the other two signs were grandfathered in. Mr. Warner stated yes. Ms. Chase-Wells asked about a total square footage requirement. Mr. Warner stated 32 square feet maximum. Discussion followed in regard to the zoning and village district regulations, the type of lighting allowed (external only), the new Tylerville streetscape, and the proposal being out of character of what's trying to be accomplished in Tylerville.

Mr. Warner stated he had encouraged Ms. Kennedy to come back and she had indicated that they were designing a monument sign (lower to ground, with the price built into it); however, they moved forward with the current application. Mr. Warner noted the applicant did not have the plan for rotary.

Ms. Wessling asked the location of the rotary. Mr. Warner stated the rotaries will be located at the intersection of Saybrook Road and Bridge Road and Saybrook Road and the Route 82 Connector ramp.

Mrs. Costa asked how difficult would it be to establish a height requirement. Mr. Warner stated P&Z would need to hold a public hearing which they should do. Mr. Warner spoke in regard to a ten foot height limit similar to Middletown and Cheshire. Mrs. Chase-Wells asked if the Board could limit the applicant to a height of ten feet even though the town does not have it as a regulation. Mr. Warner stated yes. Mrs. Chase-Wells asked if the Board would allow a 45 square foot sign on a ten foot post. Ms. Wessling and Mr. Wendt stated no, as 32 square feet is the maximum allowed. Mr. Warner stated it's more about the aesthetics as the Tylerville Village regulations were written to create a more aesthetically pleasing place. It's all about the character of the area and the proposal is not what you would see in a village district. Mr. Warner stated a variance has to be in keeping with the zoning regulations, the Board can allow some leeway, but must keep in conformance with the regulations.

Mr. Wendt suggested everyone go to Tylerville and take a good look around to be aware of what currently exists. Ms. Wessling stated if there are new regulations as of 2018, the Board shouldn't start off by changing them. Ms. Wessling also stated she believes the applicant understands they're in a different situation than the pre-existing gas stations.

Ms. Wessling stated she wonders how much their property will be impacted by creating the rotary and then wishing they hadn't put in a new sign. Mr. Warner stated the trouble is there's an operator and that individual is being told by the corporation what the corporation standards are and the need to comply.

Mrs. Chase-Wells asked if the applicant has any idea how far off they are in regard to the regulations. Mr. Wendt stated he would assume so given that they are not before the Board. Mr. Warner stated he has advised Ms. Kennedy, who represents the sign company.

There was no one from the public present.

Mr. Wendt closed the public hearing at 7:35 p.m.

**b. Variance to Allow a Side Setback of not Less than Five (5) Feet (20 Feet Required) to Allow Construction of a Garage. Applicants: Craig and Diane Murphy. Location: 999 Saybrook Road, Haddam, CT – Map 31, Lot 78**

Craig and Diane Murphy, applicants/owners, were present.

Mr. Wendt opened the hearing at 7:03 p.m.

Mr. Murphy stated they are replacing an existing structure - there was a 20 foot by 20 foot two story barn originally, it came down, but the foundation still exists. Mr. Murphy explained that they would like to make the structure bigger as 20 feet by 20 feet is too small and they are going to expand the footprint to 24 feet by 28 feet.

Mr. Wendt stated currently there's a temporary tent in the proposed location. Mr. Murphy stated the temporary tent is in front of the foundation as the temporary tent was bigger than the foundation.

Ms. Wessling asked the location of the proposed building. Mr. Murphy stated it would be right behind the tent. Ms. Wessling asked if the land goes up as a hill or is it just woods. Mr. Murphy stated yes. Ms. Wessling asked if there were a fire in the new garage would it allow the fire department sufficient room to get around the structure. Mr. Murphy stated the fire department should be able to come up into the driveway. Mr. Murphy stated they will hold the back line of where the original barn was but move it two feet towards his house. Therefore, the structure will come eight feet forward putting it just about to the back or slightly into the tent. Mr. Murphy stated they do plan on lowering the floor level of the garage hopefully by three feet if they do not hit ledge. Ms. Wessling asked if there were drawings. Mr. Murphy stated yes, but they do not show it very well. Mr. Murphy showed a map to the Board pointing out the original rear line and how they would be moving the structure two feet and eight feet.

Mrs. Chase Wells asked the reason for moving the structure. Mr. Murphy stated he would like to expand the structure and it wouldn't hurt to move it away from the neighbor (Stone House apartments). Mr. Murphy showed the Board another drawing showing distance for the house and the original barn. It was noted that the building will not be moving eight feet but extending an additional eight feet.

Ms. Wessling asked how much land there is before it starts to rise. Mr. Murphy stated someone wrote 24 feet to the back on the drawing and it will not be changing. Ms. Wessling stated the hearing notice said five feet and she wondered if five feet would be sufficient space. Clarification was made about the five feet.

Mrs. Costa asked the location of the tent. Mr. Murphy pointed it out. Mrs. Costa asked how far it would be. Mr. Murphy stated it's difficult to determine, approximately five feet, but it's moving away from the neighbor.

Mrs. Chase-Wells asked Mrs. Murphy if a letter was sent to the neighbors. Mrs. Murphy stated yes, and they did not receive a response back. Mr. Wendt asked how many abutting neighbors are there. Mr. Murphy stated two noting that someone owns the property behind them but nothing is on the site. Mr. Wendt stated there is a lot of dense thick weeds and brush between the Stone House apartments and the Murphy's. Mr. Murphy stated at one time it was all lawn.

Mr. Wendt asked the current distance between the back wall to the southern property line. Mr. Murphy stated he's not sure as it's a difficult line to define. Mr. Warner stated the problem is it has never been surveyed. Mr. Warner stated once they apply for the permit, they have to stake it out and see if any monuments can be found. Mr. Murphy stated he's not seen anything, but noted there are some stones from an old fence.

There was no public present.

**MOTION:** Margo Chase-Wells motioned to close the public hearings at 7:20 p.m. Ken Wendt second. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **4. PUBLIC MEETING**

**a. Variance to Allow a Free Standing Pylon Sign with Integrated Illumination within the Tylerville Village District Zone. Applicant: Kara Kennedy. Location: 1598 Saybrook Road, Haddam, CT – Map 49, Lot 31-A**

**SEATED: DeBold, Wendt, Wessling, Chase-Wells, and Costa.**

The applicant nor a representative were present.

**MOTION:** Margo Chase-Wells motioned to deny without prejudice the application for a variance to allow a free standing pylon sign with integrated illumination within the Tylerville Village District Zone. **Conditions:** 1. Standard Permit Conditions. 2) Special Conditions/Modifications – No. Marjorie DeBold second. Motion carried with Mrs. Costa abstaining.

**b. Variance to Allow a Side Setback of not Less than Five (5) Feet (20 Feet Required) to Allow Construction of a Garage. Applicants: Craig and Diane Murphy. Location: 999 Saybrook Road, Haddam, CT – Map 31, Lot 78**

**SEATED: DeBold, Wendt, Wessling, Chase-Wells, and Costa.**

Craig and Diane Murphy, applicants/owners, were present.

As there was still no one present for the first hearing, the Commission agreed to vote on this matter.

Mrs. Chase-Wells and Mrs. DeBold stated they did not have a problem with the proposal.

**MOTION:** Marjorie DeBold motioned to approve a variance to allow a side setback of not less than five (5) feet where 20 feet is required to allow construction of a garage. **Conditions:** 1) Standard Permit Conditions. 2) Special Conditions/Modifications – No. Kate Wessling second. Motion carried with Susann Costa abstaining.

## **5. Approval/Correction of the Minutes**

**MOTION:** Marjorie DeBold motioned to approve the 31 March 2022 public hearing/meeting minutes as submitted. Kate Wessling second. Motion carried unanimously.

## **6. Open Discussion**

There was no discussion.

## **7. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** Susann Costa motioned to adjourn. Margo Chase-Wells second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Bunny Hall Batzner*

Bunny Hall Batzner  
Recording Clerk

**The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 30 June 2022.**